

Jo Bonner

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FARM BILL FIELD HEARING HELD AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

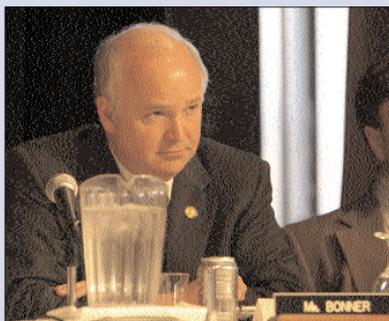
The House Committee on Agriculture, led by Chairman Bob Goodlatte, convened a field hearing last month seeking producer input on the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill. The hearing was the second in a series that the committee plans to conduct around the country this year.

Congressman Mike Rogers hosted the hearing, located in his district on the campus of Auburn University. I, along with Congressman Terry Everett and eleven other House Agriculture Committee members, was pleased to join him for this event.

Over a three hour period, we heard from two panels of witnesses regarding a variety of farm policy issues and what modifications should be made to the current farm bill which is set to expire next year. Local producers, agriculture officials, and students were among the almost 200 members of the community who attended the hearing.

I was pleased that my recommendation to be a panelist, James Harwell, President of the Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association, was allowed to testify. Given our recent devastating hurricanes, it is vitally important that we assist our nursery industry in the 2007 Farm Bill.

Currently, nurseries are not eligible to receive assistance through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) which provides emergency assistance to other segments of the agriculture industry. It is my sincere hope that nurseries will be eligible under TAP in the upcoming farm bill, and I expressed this concern to the committee and other panelists during my allotted time for questions and comments.



I was pleased to participate in the 2007 Farm Bill field hearing held at Auburn University last month.

From the mailbox...

Dear Congressman Jo Bonner,

I am writing to thank you for all your help with my citizenship application. I took the Oath of Allegiance last week and am now a proud citizen of the USA. I had almost given up hope of ever accomplishing this, but thanks to the excellent work done by your office, in particular, by Brooks Chew, it all went through very smoothly.

Best regards and thanks,

Sincerely,

A satisfied citizen

February 23, 2006



NATIONAL JOURNAL RATING

As is the case with all members of the House of Representatives, the most important "report card" we receive on our job performance in Washington is the one our constituents give us every two years.

In addition to this evaluation, however, we in Congress also receive periodic evaluations from organizations and groups based here in Washington and throughout the country. Recently, the National Journal issued its annual ratings on members of the House and Senate and calculated member's conservative or liberal scores based on votes we cast in 2005 on important economic, social, and foreign-policy legislation.

I am proud to report that I received a conservative score of 86.0, meaning that my views on important legislative and policy issues make me more conservative than 86 percent of the other members of the House. My score places me as the most conservative member of the Alabama House delegation and is a positive indicator that the work I am doing and the votes I cast are in line with conservative values of the First District.

JANUARY TOWN HALL MEETINGS WELL-ATTENDED

In late January, my staff and I concluded our first twenty district town hall meetings of the year. I am very appreciative of everyone who took time out of their busy schedules to come out and visit with us, many of whom came armed with some insightful comments and tough questions. The comments and opinions each of you shared were very valuable.



It was a pleasure to meet with Shirley Hopkins, A.J. Benintende, and Norman Snyder at my town hall meeting in Magnolia Springs. Ms. Hopkins is the 1st District representative in the National Silver-Haired Congress. Mr. Benintende is Alabama's silver senator, and Mr. Snyder is a former representative.

At every meeting, men and women expressed concern about hurricane recovery efforts and the fast approach of this year's hurricane season. Many of those in attendance raised questions about the new prescription drug plan. There were also numerous comments and questions on the state of the national economy, the war in Iraq, and the high price of gas.

The comments provided at these town meetings, as well as the letters, e-mails, and phone calls my offices receive each week, will be very important as I weigh in on these and many other issues affecting our district, our state, and our nation. I assure you that I have heard all of your concerns and will do everything in my power to work with you and your leaders in local and state government to improve the quality of life for everyone in south Alabama.

OFF THE AIR — TEMPORARILY

As a housekeeping note, my weekly television show, "The Gulf Coast Congressional Report" and my weekly radio program will be off the air for the next few weeks. Due to House rules designed to keep an incumbent from having an unfair advantage, I am required not to air my show during this qualifying period before the June primary elections. I will keep you updated as to when we will return.



CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TOURS KATRINA-DAMAGED AREAS



Speaker Hastert, Majority Whip Roy Blunt, and I listen intently to Governor Riley's comments regarding Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

Earlier this month, I joined a congressional delegation, led by Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R-IL), on a three-day tour of the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast. I, along with 34 members of Congress, traveled to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

In Mobile, we were briefed by Governor Bob Riley (R-AL) as well as state and local officials on our recovery efforts and preparations for the 2006 hurricane season which begins June 1. It was clear to the delegation that work still remains; however, many were impressed by Alabama's preparation leading up to the landfall of Hurricane Katrina, and as a result, the response following the storm.

This month, Congress overwhelmingly passed President Bush's supplemental spending request for hurricane relief by a vote of 348-71. This is an important step to ensure that we have done everything we can in order to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season.



Students from Baker and LeFlore High Schools were in Washington this month participating in Close Up, and I was able to take a picture with them on the steps of the U.S. Capitol.



Also in our nation's capital this month were students from Theodore High School.